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ABSTRACT

In 1990, the Leon County Public Schools (FL) implemented a voluntary school-based, decision-making (SBDM) council. This paper presents findings of an evaluation of the SBDM system in the school district conducted after 5 years of activity. Data were obtained from interviews with 61 principals and 34 site-council chairs and from a survey of 206 out of 1,104 former members of school councils. The majority of respondents viewed shared decision making as a means for empowering and involving stakeholders and for developing feelings of ownership. Most council decisions involved the budget and curriculum. Overall, respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the SBDM process. However, three-fourths of the respondents commented on barriers that impeded success: lack of time; the principals' difficulties in assuming new leadership roles; and the need for continuous staff inservice, increased representation from different groups, and clarity about the SBDM Central Council and its relationship with the local councils. Six recommendations are included. Copies of the interview protocol, survey, and survey results are included. (LMI)

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School Councils' Perceptions of Site-Based Decision Making: Challenges and Benefits

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, March 1997, Chicago, Illinois.

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EA 028 533

School Councils' Perceptions of Site-Based Decision Making: Challenges and Benefits

Introduction:

Current reform efforts in the United States emphasize the importance of site-based decision making. A central theme of the 1986 Carnegie Commission Report was that schools must be restructured to permit teachers and principals to shape and manage decision making at the local school level

In the Spring of 1990, the Leon Classroom Teachers Association and the School Board of Leon County ratified Master Contract language establishing a system of Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) as a democratic system that enables a school's community- defined as its principals, teachers, staff, parents, students, business partners, and other interested citizens- to actively and directly shape the quality of education for its students and the quality of the workplace for the staff, with the hallmarks traits being **Flexibility and Accountability** . It made participation at a site voluntary in that a super majority of the staff had to vote to approve before the school became site based. Once a school voted to become a SBDM school they were required to establish a site council, in a democratic manner, that would systematically involve all segments of the school community. It established a Central SBDM Council to coordinate the effort with prescribed functions and responsibilities. It also established a waiver process.

In 1992, with the advent of Florida's School Improvement and Accountability legislation and the introduction of Blueprint 2000, the Master Contract language was modified to amalgamate the requirements of the legislation with the Site-Based Decision Making system in Leon County School. This unification put more emphasis on school improvement, but the system for decision making was left to each school site to decide.

In 1991, seven schools elected to participate in SBDM. The next year, the number of participating schools had risen to 22, and by the beginning of the 1995-96 school year 41 of the 44 school sites were SBDM schools.

At the November 1995 SBDM Central Council meeting, a discussion was held concerning the need to conduct an evaluation of the SBDM system in Leon County Schools after approximately five years of activity. With the research assistance of the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Department and an outside consultant, a study design committee was appointed to carry out this project. This committee met a number of times during the 1995-96 school year to design and oversee the study.

This report is intended to inform on this effort. It includes a description of the purpose, methodology, results, recommendations and is supplemented by two appendices. Appendix A contains the interview questionnaire for principals and site council chairs of the SBDM school councils, summaries of the 61 interviews, and a brief report. Appendix B includes the survey instrument for current and former members of SBDM school councils, quantitative results, qualitative analysis of the open questions, and a brief report.

Purpose of the Study:

The focus of the study was to assess the effect that site based governance has had in the Leon County Schools in order to ascertain what types of mid-course corrections might be necessary as we continue in our efforts to improve SBDM in our schools. The study explored the extent to which the respondents understood the SBDM concept, their involvement, participation and level of satisfaction with the process and the perceived effects of such practice. Specifically, the following questions were addressed:

1. How do stakeholders define SBDM, what do they expect from SBDM, and have their expectations been met?
2. What does SBDM look like? That is, how has SBDM been Implemented?
3. What are the effects of SBDM?
4. How satisfied are stakeholders with SBDM?
5. What are the significant barriers to the success of SBDM?
6. What mid-course correction should be taken to further strengthen SBDM in the Leon County Schools?

Theoretical Framework:

Current research on SBDM practices, decentralization efforts, school governance, and teacher participation in decision making, provided the framework for the design and conduct of the study. (Noble, Deemer & Davis, 1996; Miller, 1995; Cambone, Weiss & Weigh, 1992; Mills, 1992; Hill & Bonan, 1991; Wohlstetter, Smyer & Mohrman, 1994; and Taylor & Bogotch, (1994).

Research on models of SBDM generally revealed different configurations on organizing and governing schools in an attempt to transform schools into organizations that will more effectively and efficiently improve student performance (Mills, 1992; Hill & Bonan, 1991). of teaching (involvement of teachers in the decision making process), and consensus building. However, although there is no one definition of school based management, it should be noted that it typically includes components of shared governance, participatory decision making, professionalization

The research on the involvement of stakeholders in SBDM is somewhat not conclusive. Weiss Cambone & Wyeth, 1992) concluded that although many teachers initially were attracted to shared decision making, they ended up wanting to be consulted and preferring that the principal makes the decisions. Weiss and her colleagues found that "teachers are likely to resist decisions that require them to make drastic changes in the way they teach" and that "many teachers resisted accepting responsibilities as peer supervisors for other teachers". Yet teachers in Dade County (Collins & Hanson, 1991) reported that substantial support for teacher participation in decision making was noted in the areas of curriculum development and student discipline activities. The Dade teachers also reported that "collegiality" was seen as an increasingly characteristic of SBDM schools.

Based on recent research, there is little evidence that SBDM affects student performance in either direction. Various evaluation reports confirm these research findings. It may be because we still use traditional measures of student performance. Collins & Hanson (1991) argued that "the impact of many of the innovations which are installed is not adequately assessed by standardized achievement tests".

Barriers to implementing SBDM are well reported in the literature: They often include: reception of mixed signals from state/district office (Noble, Deemer & Davis, 1996): time to be involved in of process (Weiss, 1992); lack of rewards (Wohlstetter, Smyer & Mohrman, 1994), etc.

Design of the Study:

Two methods were used to answer the questions described above:

1. A series of interviews were conducted with the principals and site council chairs of the SBDM school councils in Leon County.

2. A survey of current and former members of the SBDM school councils in Leon County was administered.

The interviews of principals and site council chairs were conducted by members of the Central SBDM Council during March and April 1996. Each of the 20 Central Council members was assigned to conduct two (2) interviews at schools at which SBDM had been implemented. The Director of Program Evaluation & Monitoring of the Leon County School District also conducted an interview. The interview questionnaire is presented in Appendix A.

The survey of members of SBDM school councils was distributed to a random sample of 678 of the 1,104 members of school councils who had served on these councils during the 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96 school years. Distribution and return of the surveys took place in April and May 1996. The sample size was chosen to achieve a margin of error of 3.5% at the 95% confidence level. Approximately two weeks after surveys were mailed, current council members were sent e-mail messages reminding them to return the survey and former members received a mailed reminder.

The overall composition of the councils during the three years was:

Teachers: 56%
Parents: 17%
Principals/ Assistant Principals: 8%
Support Staff: 11%
Business/Community Representatives: 4%
Students: 4%

Due to the anticipated difficulty of contacting the parent members and the greater ease of contacting teacher members, parents were oversampled and teachers were undersampled. Twenty-one percent (21%) of the sample were parents and 53% were teachers. The percentage of the remaining groups was equal to their percentage in the population (see above).

Results:

Interview questionnaires were received from 61 principals and site council chairs from 34 of the 41 schools that had implemented SBDM. Two schools were not in the stage in which they could be interviewed. These 61 interviewees represent 78% of the total population of 78 principals and site council chairs.

Surveys were received from 206 SBDM school council members. This equals a response rate of 30% and represents 19% of the total population of 1,104 members who served during the period of interest. The composition of the group that returned surveys was:

Teachers: 61%
Parents: 15%
Principals/ Assistant Principals: 9%
Support Staff: 8%
Other (including business/community representatives and students): 6%

It should be noted that the survey response rate represents less than one-third of the number of current and former site council members to which surveys were distributed and less than one-fifth of the population of council members during the period of interest. The results of the survey will differ from that which would have been obtained from the entire population to the extent that non-respondents differ from respondents. Thus, one should be cautious in generalizing from the results for respondents to results that would be obtained from the population. However, as shown by the data above, the composition of the respondent group is fairly close to the composition of the population, which supports the assumption that the respondent group is representative of the population.

Similarly, the results of the interviews will differ from the results that would have been obtained from all principals and site council chairs to the extent that non-respondents differ from respondents. However, the 78% response rate for this group is high enough that we can be reasonably confident that the results for the population would not differ drastically from those of the respondents.

To ensure the quality of the study data, a systematic random sample of interview questionnaires and survey forms was reviewed for coding and data entry errors. Twenty-three (38%) of the 61 interview questionnaires and 40 (22%) of the 180 surveys on which one or more open ended questions were answered were reviewed. The review revealed that 96.2% of the interview data and 96.8% of the open ended survey data had been correctly coded and entered. These were deemed to be acceptable accuracy rates. All errors were corrected and included in the data for the final report on the study. Likewise, the initial statistical results of the survey questionnaire were verified by conducting code checks on a random sample of closed -ended questions in all the survey questionnaires. The review revealed that the data had been correctly coded and the results were accurate.

The interview and survey results are presented below and are grouped according to the study questions which they were intended to address:

How Do Stakeholders Define SBDM, What Do They Expect From SBDM, and Have Their Expectations Been Met?

1. When asked to define SBDM, the most common characteristics mentioned as part of the definition were:

   a. All stakeholders involved/ having input re: decision making (53%)
   b. All stakeholders having an equal voice in decision making (29%)
   c. Decisions made by consensus; efforts to build consensus (17%)
   d. Decisions that are made affect entire school (16%)

2. The most commonly mentioned expectations of SBDM (by interviewees) are:

   a. All stakeholders involved/ having input re: decision making and a greater feeling of ownership of the decision making process among stakeholders (78%)
   b. Better decision making/ better decision making process (13%)
   c. Higher morale among stakeholders, especially school staff (10%)
   d. Shared responsibility for decision making among stakeholders (10%)

(See "Concluding Comments" section for a discussion of whether expectations of SBDM have been met.)

What Does S.B.D.M Look Like? (How Has S.B.D.M. Been Implemented?)

1. The membership of the SBDM school councils in Leon County during the 1995-96 school year was:

   Teachers: 57%
   Parents: 15%
   Principals/ Assistant Principals: 10%
   Support Staff: 10%
   Business/Community Representatives: 4%
   Students: 3%

2. Consensus is the most widely used method of making final decisions (approximately two-thirds of both interviewees and survey respondents reported that consensus or a variant of consensus is used to make final decisions) and is much more prevalent than majority rule or final decision making by the principal.

3. The most frequently mentioned types of decisions made by school SBDM councils are those regarding:

    a. Budget (48% of interviewees and 54% of survey respondents)
    b. Curriculum (48% of interviewees and 70% of survey respondents)
    c. Staffing and Personnel (38% of interviewees and 37% of survey respondents)
    d. School Improvement Plan (25% of interviewees and 80% of survey respondents)
    e. Student discipline (72% of survey respondents)
    f. Facility management (59% of survey respondents)
    g. Course scheduling (39% of survey respondents)
    h. Scheduling/School Calendar (21% of interviewees)

4. Principals and council chairs most often see their roles in the SBDM process as :
    a. Facilitator/moderator (68% of interviewees)
    b. Information/resource provider (32% of interviewees)
    c. "One of the team" (27% of interviewees)

5. The most frequently mentioned (by interviewees) means of communicating decisions to faculty and parents are:

Faculty	Parents
a. Minutes of site council meetings (67%)	a. Newsletters (67%)
b. Bulletins, e-mail, posted notes (35%)	b. PTO, SAC, and other meetings (27%))
c. Faculty meetings/conferences (20%)	c. Minutes of site council meetings (28%)
d. Newsletters (13%)	d. Bulletins, posted notes (16%)

What Are The Effects of SBDM?

1. The most commonly mentioned positive effects of SBDM are:

    a. More involvement/input into the decision making process by various stakeholders and feelings of empowerment and ownership of the decision making process (41% of interviewees and 59% of survey respondents)
    b. Improved communication (29% of interviewees and 17% of survey respondents)
    c. Greater feelings of collegiality/bonding/cohesiveness among school staff (22% of interviewees and 12% of survey respondents)

d. Stakeholders are better informed about how the school operates, how decisions are made, what are the problems (20% of survey respondents)
e. Improved decision making, solution identification (17% of survey respondents)

2. Respondents are divided over whether SBDM has improved academic performance such as test scores or classroom performance (see narrative summaries of interview and survey results in Appendix A and B.)

How Satisfied Are Stakeholders With SBDM?

1. Overall, the results of the interviews and the closed-ended survey questions indicate a high level of satisfaction with the SBDM process: Approximately three-fourths of interviewees were satisfied with the results of SBDM at their schools, while over 80% percent of survey respondents expressed satisfaction with SBDM on a broad range of issues including comfort with decision making activities, method of making decisions, opportunities for participation in the process, and support for continuation of SBDM.

2. However, there are elements of SBDM with which a substantial proportion of respondents were dissatisfied. Twenty-one percent (21%) of survey respondents think that SBDM needs major improvements, while 14% are unsure if such improvements are needed. When asked to list significant barriers to the success of SBDM, 79% (163) of the 206 survey respondents listed one or more such barriers. One-third of those who listed barriers thought that the process was too time consuming or took too much time away from teaching duties. (Approximately one -fourth (23%) of interviewees also thought the process was too time consuming and 15% of survey respondents who no longer serve on an SBDM school council said they no longer serve because it too much of their time or required them to do too much.) Over one-fifth (21%) of respondents who listed barriers cited conflict among members or members putting their personal agendas above the best interests of the school. Fifteen percent (15%) of those who identified barriers indicated that the principal/administration had too much power.

3. Additional areas of concern are:

    1. Lack of/ need for training (cited by 25% of interviewees and 15% of survey respondents, 24% of survey respondents had received no training);

2. Lack of involvement/ participation of various stakeholders (cited by 32% of interviewees; less than 28% of survey respondents said that business partners, community members or students are well represented on SBDM school councils and only 59% said parents were well represented; 24% of survey respondents disagree that group representation on their councils should remain the same and 17% are unsure if it should remain the same); and

3. The relationship between the SBDM Central Council and school councils (48% of survey respondents were unsure if their council's relationship with the Central Council had been beneficial).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The following conclusions can be drawn in the context of efforts to continue to improve shared decision making in the schools.

1. The majority of the respondents view shared decision making as a means for empowering stakeholders, bringing about feelings of ownership, and an opportunity for being involved in the decision making process. Variations in perceptions exist regarding whether academic performance and student learning at their schools have improved as a result of SBDM. Although there is a perception among the respondents that SBDM improves academic performance, when asked to provide examples, a majority of the respondents have difficulty identifying specific traditional measures of academic performance.

2. Overall, the respondents seem to be highly satisfied with SBDM and the process of decision making in their schools. Eighty percent of survey respondents expressed satisfaction with SBDM on a variety of issues. It also should be noted that three-fourths of the respondents commented on barriers and difficulties they believe act as a deterrent to the success of site-base management practices. Some of these obstacles are:

- time to implement the process. One-third of the respondents believe that the process takes too much time, requires too much work, or takes too much time away from teaching duties.
- need for continuous inservice for school staff including staff skills and roles for SBDM to work
- difficulty for some principals in assuming new roles, setting aside old concepts of leadership and decision making

- need to "reach out "to relatively uninvolved parties within schools (non-teacher council members and support personnel). Eighteen percent of respondents felt they had served long enough and it was time for someone else to serve.
- need to include more representation from parents, students and community/ business partners

3. Curriculum and instruction, student discipline, technology and school improvement plan are the most commonly addressed issues dealt by the councils.

4. There is a lack of clarity regarding the role of the SBDM Central Council and its relationship with the local Councils. Forty-eight percent of survey respondents were unsure if their council's relationship with the Central Council has been beneficial.

In summary, it appears that the major defining characteristics of SBDM (participation by all stakeholder groups in decision making and making decisions by consensus) have been implemented. Likewise, it appears that the major expectation of SBDM (participation by all stakeholders groups in decision making) has been met, given that the most frequently positive effect of SBDM is participation by all stakeholders groups in decision making and the most prevalent means of decision making is, by far, consensus.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION TOWARD MID-COURSE CORRECTION

While the results of this study indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the SBDM process in the Leon County Schools, it is clear that some necessary mid-course corrections should be undertaken to sustain what has been achieved and improve the process in the future. To this end the following recommendations for future action are made.

- The Central Council should appoint a committee to examine all aspects of the "time" problem and make recommendations for a solution bringing to bear such vehicles as the master contract, school board policy, additional resources, elimination of duplicated efforts, and training.

- Major efforts need to be undertaken to provide training focusing on rejuvenating the SBDM process at each site,. Emphases should be placed on conflict resolution, effective communication, team building, time management, consensus building etc.

- While the study shows a great deal of satisfaction around the quality of the workplace goal (involvement, communication, empowerment, collegiality, teamwork) expressed in the contract definition of SBDM, the other part of the equation is that the quality of education for students must be emphasized by all participants in the process. To this end, the Central Council through its action and communications should deliver this message.
- Walking the fine line between directing and leading, the Central Council should establish clear communication paths to the schools and between schools to assure that the goals of SBDM can be further realized.

- Efforts should be undertaken to assure that "all segments of the School Community" are systematically involved in the SBDM process.

- Further review and analysis of this and other studies should be continued with appropriate recommendations to follow.

APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW

- Interview Questionnaire

- Interview Results
  - Narrative Report
  - Spreadsheet

SITE- BASED DECISION MAKING REVIEW PROCESS
INTERVIEW FORM

Date of Interview: _____ School _____

Year school adopt SBDM _____ Principal_____ Site Chairperson _____
Years as Chairperson _____

Let's start by talking about the decision making process at this school.

1. How do you define "site-based decision-making" ?

2. What benefits do you expect from the SBDM process?

3. How would you describe the decision-making process in this school?

4. What are the functions and responsibilities of the School-Site Council in your school? How are they different from the School Advisory Council?

5. What types of decisions are made by the Site-Council? (You may mention the areas of curriculum, instruction budget, personnel, planning etc)

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6. How are decisions being made by the Site-Council?

. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?

. How are teachers involved in the decision-making process?

. How are students involved in the decision-making process?

). How are decisions communicated to faculty? To parents?

). Can you name a school-wide decision made by the Site-Council that benefited the students? (Ask the incipal if he/she can show the minutes of the meeting when this decision was made)

ow, let's talk about the level of satisfaction with the process
Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school? (Refer to Question 2)

What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM ?

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3. What do you believe are the general feelings of your parents about SBDM ?

Now, let's talk about outcomes

1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?

2. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school? In what way?

3. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM? Can you list some?

OTHER

1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?

2. What do you feel is going well with the process ?

3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

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Please return your completed forms by March 15, 1996 to:

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Tallahassee, Florida 32304

Results of Interviews of School SBDM Council Members

Response Rate:

Interview questionnaires were received from 61 respondents from 34 of the 39 schools. The name of the school was left blank on one questionnaire and we were unable to determine from which school it came.

Results:

The most common characteristics mentioned as part of the definition of SBDM are: all stakehclders involved/having input regarding decision making (53%), all stakeholders having an equal voice in decision making (29%), making decisions by consensus;efforts to builds consensus (17%), and making decisions that affect entire school (16%).

The most commonly mentioned expected benefits of SBDM are: all stakeholders involved/having input re: decision making and a greater feeling of ownership of the decision making process among stakeholders (78%), better decision making process (13%), higher morale among stakeholders,especially school staff (10%), and shared responsibility for decision making among stakeholders (10%).

The vast majority of respondents (approximately three-fourths) are satisfied with the results of SBDM at their schools and believe that teachers have generally positive feelings about SBDM.

Fewer respondents, but still a majority (58%), believe that the general feelings of parents about SBDM are positive. Quite a few respondents (20%) stated that parents at their schools are not involved in the process, do not understand the process, or are unaware of the process.

The most frequently mentioned effects of SBDM are: more involvement in decision making and a greater feeling of ownership of the process by stakeholders (41%), improved or more communication (29%), more cooperation/ cohesiveness among teachers or others (22%), and feelings of empowerment by stakeholders (22%).

Over two-thirds (71%) of respondents state that student learning has been affected by SBDM, but only 10% of the 71% indicate that traditional measures of learning/ achievement, such as test scores and number of students graduating, had increased. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the 71% cited improvements in educationonal "process" factors such as improvements in curriculum and greater focus on students and student learning.

Likewise, over two-thirds (72%) of respondents think that student outcomes have been affected by SBDM, but in response to this question, 38% of the 72% cited improved test scores or classroom performance in specific subjects as examples; 15% of the 72% stated that student discipline/ behavior had improved.

Lack of involvement by various stakeholders (32%) and not enough time/ too much to do (24%) are the most frequent answers when respondents are asked what is not working the way respondents would like to see it work.

The most frequently mentioned elements of SBDM that are working well are: greater involvement by more people and a greater feeling of ownership of the decision making process (40%), a greater sense of collegiality/ togetherness among stakeholders (18%), and improved communication/ more open discussions (17%).

When asked for additional comments, 30% made positive comments of a general nature about SBDM and 25% said that the Site Council members need training or additional training.

The most frequently cited difference between the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Councils and the SACs is that the SACs are responsible for the school improvement plan (34%) and the Site Councils have other wide ranging responsibilities; 44% of respondents stated that their Site Council was responsible for "day to day" and/or "school-wide" issues.

The types of decisions made by Site Councils that are most often mentioned are: budget (48%); curriculum (48%); personnel/staffing (38%); school improvement plan (25%); instruction, such as grading policies and homework policies (21%), and scheduling (21%).

Consensus is the most popular form of decision making; 43% of respondents report that their Site Councils use consensus or strive for consensus, while an additional 23% indicate that a variant of consensus (for example, majority vote if consensus cannot be reached) is used. Only 10% of respondents stated that their Site Councils make decisions by majority vote.

Respondents most often saw their roles in the decision making process as that of: a facilitator (68%), information/resource provider (32%), and/or as "one of the team" or equal to all ogther members (27%).

Response Key	1	2	3	4	5	6
Questions						
DECISION-MAKING						
1. How do you define "site-based decision making?	All stakeholders involved/having input re: decision-making.	Making decisions by consensus; consensus building	Decisions that are made at the school level, (rather than at district level).	Making decisions that are not dictated by the principal.	Making decisions in the best interest of the school.	All stakeholders having an equal voice; shared decision making; a democratic process.
	31	10	1	1	1	17
	53%	17%	2%	2%	2%	29%
2. What benefits do you expect from the SBDM process?	All stakeholders involved/having input re: decision-making (including "empowerment").	Higher morale	Greater awareness of school issues/ understanding of decision making process	Greater buy in/ feeling of ownership among various stakeholder groups	Improved communication	Better decisions, better decision making process, better solution identification.
	38	6	5	10	5	8
	62%	10%	8%	16%	8%	13%
10. a. How are decisions communicated to faculty?	Through minutes of Site Council meetings	Through faculty meetings/ conferences.	Through newsletter.	Through PTO meetings.	By bulletins/memos/e-mail/ posted notes	Through published agendas.
	40	12	8	0	21	6
	67%	20%	13%	0%	35%	10%
10. b. How are decisions communicated to parents?	Through minutes of Site Council meetings	Through meetings/ conferences other than PTO, (includes SAC).	Through newsletter.	Through PTO meetings.	By bulletins/memos/e-mail/ posted notes	Through published agendas.
	16	10	39	6	9	2
	28%	17%	67%	10%	16%	3%

Response Key	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Questions							
DECISION-MAKING							
1. How do you define "site-based decision making?	Majority rule; tie breaker	Making best/ good/ high quality decisions	Making/defining day to day operations of school	Missing/blank, cannot interpret answer	Making decisions that affect entire school/ school wide issues	Making decisions that are significant/ important to school	Feeling of ownership by various stakeholders
	1	2	1	3	9	4	0
	2%	3%	2%	5%	16%	7%	0%
2. What benefits do you expect from the SBDM process?	Better student outcomes, school improvement, academic performance	Increased self-esteem	More sensitive to stakeholders' needs	Prevention of crises	Greater commitment by participants	More satisfaction among stakeholders	Shared leadership/authority
	5	1	2	2	1	2	0
	8%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	0%
10. a. How are decisions communicated to faculty?	Through faculty reps on site council	Through surveys	By phone	Missing/blank/ cannot interpret answer	Letters/ individual correspondence	Teachers attend council meetings	
	7	2	0	1	0	3	
	12%	3%	0%	2%	0%	5%	
10. b. How are decisions communicated to parents?	Through site council members (parent reps)	Through surveys	By phone	Missing/blank/ cannot interpret answer	Letters/ individual correspondence	Parents attend council meetings	
	4	1	1	3	3	0	
	7%	2%	2%	5%	5%	0%	

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Response Key	14	15	16	17	18	19
Questions						
DECISION-MAKING						
1. How do you define "site-based decision making?	Decisions made after collecting information/ data on issues, deliberating issues	Process for school improvement	Decisions made by entire school	Clear role f all decision m kers	Opportunity for teachers to have input re: decisions	Chance for staff to help students
	3	3	1	1	2	1
	5%	5%	2%	2%	3%	2%
2. What benefits do you expect from the SBDM process?	Shared responsibility among various stakeholders	Better cooperation/ relationships, sense of unity/ trust among staff	Focus on children/ students	More efficient use of resources	Opportunity for teachers to have input re: decisions	
	6	5	4	2	2	
	10%	8%	7%	3%	3%	
10. a. How are decisions communicated to faculty?						
10. b. How are decisions communicated to parents?						

Response Key	19
Questions	
DECISION-MAKING	
1. How do you define "site-based decision making?	Chance for staff to help students
	1
	2%
2. What benefits do you expect from the SBDM process?	
10. a. How are decisions communicated to faculty?	
10. b. How are decisions communicated to parents?	

Response Key	1	2	3	4
Questions				
DECISION-MAKING				
4. a. What are the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Council in your school?	Deals w/ day to day issues	Responsible for all decisions	Deals w/school wide issues	Site Council & SAC are combined or deal w/ same issues (2-Wesson prin., Rued. prin.)
	15	1	12	17
	25%	2%	20%	28%
4.b. How are they different from the SAC?	SAC deals w/school improvement (plan).	Responsible for all decisions	Deals w/school wide/ global/ larger issues	SAC & Site Council are combined.
	21	0	2	17
	34%	0%	3%	28%
5. What types of decisions are made by the Site Council?	budget	curriculum	instruction (including homework policy. grading)	personnel/ staffing (incl. hiring, staff allocation)
	29	29	13	23
	48%	48%	21%	38%
6. How are decisions being made by the Site Council?	consensus	majority vote/rule	Consensus, but majority vote/rule if consensus cannot be reached	Consensus, but super majority vote (e.g., 75%) if consensus cannot be reached
	26	6	7	1
	43%	10%	11%	2%
7. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?	Facilitator/ guide/ moderator. Keep process moving. Sounding board	Help build consensus.	Information provider/organizer. Resource person/provider. Researcher.	Make decisions when consensus cannot be reached. To decide when principal should make the decision.
	40	1	19	7
	68%	2%	32%	12%
SATISFACTION WITH S.B.D.M.				
1. Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school?	Yes	No	Yes, with qualifications.	Cannot say/don't know.
	44	6	10	0
	72%	10%	16%	0%

Response Key	1	2	3	4
2. What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM?	Positive	Negative	Positive, with qualifications	Cannot say/don't know.
	48	1	8	1
	79%	2%	13%	2%
3. What do you believe are the general feeliings of your parents about SBDM?	Positive	Negative	Positive, with qualifications	Too early to say/ cannot say/ don't know.
	34	0	1	2
	58%	0%	2%	3%
OUTCOMES				
1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?	More involvement/ input by various stakeholders	More 'buy in", sense of ownership among stakeholders.	Better/improved/ more communication (including mediation).	Better/higher morale
	14	10	17	6
	24%	17%	29%	10%
2.a. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school?	Yes	No	Indirectly	Cannot say/ don't know.
	42	2	4	0
	71%	3%	7%	0%
2.b. In what way?	Test scores improved.	Number of students graduating/ receiving diplomas/ earning credits increased.	Students are happier.	Better teacher morale; teachers are happier.
	3	1	4	4
	7%	2%	10%	10%
3. a. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM?	Yes	No	Indirectly	Cannot say/ don't know.
	41	2	2	4
	72%	4%	4%	7%

Response Key	1	2	3	4
3.b. Can you list some?	Test scores improved.	Number of students graduating/ receiving diplomas increased.	Students' self-esteem improved; students are happier.	Better teacher morale; teachers are happier.
	11	1	5	1
	27%	2%	12%	2%
OTHER				
1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?	Everything is working well/ the way we would like to see it work.	Decisions are not made timely/ info to make decisions not received timely.	Principal has too much power/ authority.	Not enough time for decision making process/ too much to do.
	7	6	2	14
	12%	10%	3%	24%
2. What do you feel is going well with the process?	Everything is working well/ the way we would like to see it work.	More satisfied with the decision making process (including meeting process)/ general positive comment about the process.	More people involved/ more opportunity for involvement/ more opportunity to affect decision making/ empowerment/ more democratic decision making.	More people understand how process works
	3	3	20	4
	5%	5%	33%	7%
3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?	Need training for Site Council members, including facilitator training.	Too little time/ too much to do.	General positive comment about SBDM.	Central Council has been helpful.
	10	5	12	1
	25%	13%	30%	3%

Response Key	5	6	7	8
Questions				
DECISION-MAKING				
4. a. What are the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Council in your school?	Other	Cannot decipher answer	Nuts & bolts, specifics of SBDM	Budget
	11	2	0	1
	18%	3%	0%	2%
4.b. How are they different from the SAC?	Other	Cannot decipher answer	Budget	Does not deal w/ day to day issues
	10	2	0	1
	16%	3%	0%	2%
5. What types of decisions are made by the Site Council?	planning	training/ professional development	technology/ equipment	student discipline/ behavior (incl. dress code
	6	2	5	5
	10%	3%	8%	8%
6. How are decisions being made by the Site Council?	Consensus, but principal decides if consensus cannot be reached	Mostly consensus, but principal makes decision in some cases	Consensus, majority vote if consensus cannot be reached, principal has veto power	Consensus AND majority vote
	2	0	1	3
	3%	0%	2%	5%
7. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?	My role is equal to everyone else's. I am just "one of the team."	Ensure that proprer procedures are followed during meeting/meeting process is impartial.	Responsible for implementing decsions.	Decide agenda items, issues
	16	3	2	2
	27%	5%	3%	3%
SATISFACTION WITH S.B.D.M.				
1. Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school?	Did not respond directly to question	Not involved/ don't know	I have mixed feelings.	
	0	0	1	
	0%	0%	2%	

Response Key	5	6	7	8
2. What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM?	Did not respond directly to question	Not involved/ don't know	I have mixed feelings.	
	0	0	3	
	0%	0%	5%	
3. What do you believe are the general feeliings of your parents about SBDM?	Did not respond directly to question.	Don't understand/ not involved/ don't know/ unaware	I have mixed feelings	Not applicable (Adult Ed. students)
	8	12	0	2
	14%	20%	0%	3%
OUTCOMES				
1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?	Feeling of empowerement/ ability to have effect on decision making by stakeholders, opportunity for leadership/ growth	More democratic decision making. People feel they have an equal voice.	Improved student outcomes (including test scores/ subject grades)	Teachers are more focused on student needs
	13	5	3	2
	22%	8%	5%	3%
2.a. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school?	Not yet.	I hope so/ I think so.		Did not answer question directly
	6	4	0	2
	10%	7%	0%	3%
2.b. In what way?	Student discipline/ behavior has improved.	Curriculum or problems related to curriculum/ instruction has improved. (process)	Other process improvements	Not applicable (i.e., answered "no" or "not yet" to "Has student learning been affected by SBDM?)
	1	6	14	12
	2%	14%	33%	29%
3. a. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM?	Not yet.	I hope so/ think so.	No answer	Did not answer question directly
	4	1	4	3
	.7%	2%	7%	5%

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Response Key	5	6	7	8
3.b. Can you list some?	Student discipline/ behavior has improved; crime rate is lower.	Curriculum has improved. (process)	Other process improvements	Specific subject skill improved; classroom skills improved.
	6	1	10	5
	15%	2%	24%	12%
OTHER				
1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?	Communications problems/ lack of open dialogue.	Lack of funding/ resources for Site Council.	Little or no follow up to ensure decisions/ assignments are implemented.	Lack of involvement by teachers.
	8	3	4	2
	14%	5%	7%	3%
2. What do you feel is going well with the process?	More people "buy in" to or feel ownership in decision making.	Better communication, e.g., open door policy, more open discussions	Improved capacity to correct problems.	Has provided teachers with sense of "empowerment," opportunity for growth/leadership.
	4	10	2	4
	7%	17%	3%	7%
3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?	Need to recognize each school's uniqueness.	Success of SBDM depends on support from school administration (e.g., principal).	Need more funding, supplies, resources for the Site Council.	Hands off approach by Central Council has given school councils feeling of real power.
	1	2	1	1
	3%	5%	3%	3%

Response Key	9	10	11	12
Questions				
DECISION-MAKING				
4. a. What are the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Council in your school?	Makes recommendations re: School Improvement Plan	Implements/ monitors School Improvement Plan	Assists w/ development of School Improvement Plan	School Improvement Plan
	1	2	0	2
	2%	3%	0%	3%
4.b. How are they different from the SAC?	Responsible for implementation of School Improvement Plan	Responsible for curriculum	Responsible for long term issues	Responsible for developing School Improvement Plan
	0	2	3	2
	0%	3%	5%	3%
5. What types of decisions are made by the Site Council?	supplements	scheduling (including master scheduling)	school improvement plan	Any/ all/ decisions school makes, a wide range of decisions
	6	13	15	7
	10%	21%	25%	11%
6. How are decisions being made by the Site Council?	Did not answer questions directly	Usually consensus, sometimes vote	Other	Consensus, but Chair decides if Site Council cannot reach consensus
	2	1	4	1
	3%	2%	7%	2%
7. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?	I sometimes make decisions.	No response	Other	I have veto power.
	1	2	1	1
	2%	3%	2%	2%
SATISFACTION WITH S.B.D.M.				
1. Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school?				

Response Key	9	10	11	12
2. What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM?				
3. What do you believe are the general feeliings of your parents about SBDM?				
OUTCOMES				
1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?	More cooperation/ cohesiveness among school staff (more teamwork, sensitivity to one another).	Problems more likely to be identified and addressed.	Greater sense of commitment (teachers?)	Does not lead to implementation of decisions.
	13	1	0	1
	22%	2%	0%	2%
2.a. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school?				
2.b. In what way?	Specific skills/ subject area improvements	Scheduling works better., is more flexible.	General comment that student learning has improved.	Focus is on students.
	0	2	8	6
	0%	5%	19%	14%
3. a. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM?				

Response Key	9	10	11	12
3.b. Can you list some?	Identified and provided needed student "interventions"; focus on students.	Not applicable: answered "No" or "Don't know" to "Do you think student outcomes have improved?"	Higher morale (specific group not identified)	General comment that student outcomes have improved.
	3	20	1	6
	7%	49%	2%	15%
OTHER				
1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?	Lack of involvement by parents	Lack of involvement by students	Lack of involvement by members of ethnic/ racial minority groups.	Lack of involvment/ active participation (general comment with no specific group identified); lack of "buy in", feeling of being represented.
	7	2	1	7
	12%	3%	2%	12%
2. What do you feel is going well with the process?	Fostered sense of team, collegiality, brought people together/more sensitive to others.	People more willing to be responsible, held accountable (focus on students/ children).	Organization/ process of meetings is going well.	Greater community support for the school.
	11	2	0	1
	18%	3%	0%	2%
3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?	Having District Office rep on school council has been positive.	Need district-wide standards/ strategies for school councils.	Need outside review of SBDM process.	Principal is supportive of SBDM.
	1	2	1	2
	3%	5%	3%	5%

Response Key	13	14	15	16
Questions				
DECISION-MAKING				
4. a. What are the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Council in your school?	Identifying solutions to problems re: School Improvement Plan/ student outcomes	Scheduling		
	1	0		
	2%	0%		
4.b. How are they different from the SAC?				
5. What types of decisions are made by the Site Council?	School wide decisions	Decisions of a daily nature, including records management, safety	Needs assessments	Other (including only power to make recommendations)
	5	7	2	3
	8%	11%	3%	5%
6. How are decisions being made by the Site Council?	Principal makes final decision	Usually consenus	Other	Majority vote mostly; sometimes principal decides
	2	1	2	1
	3%	2%	3%	2%
7. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?				
SATISFACTION WITH S.B.D.M.				
1. Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school?				

Response Key	13	14	15	16
2. What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM?				
3. What do you believe are the general feeliings of your parents about SBDM?				
OUTCOMES				
1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?	Better/more efficient decision making.	Improved student behavior/ discipline.	More people willing to be held accountable, focus on students/ academic improvement	Improvement in curriculum
	3	1	3	1
	5%	2%	5%	2%
2.a. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school?				
2.b. In what way?				
3. a. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM?				

Response Key	13	14	15	16
3.b. Can you list some?	Students feel that their opinions are valued.	Number of books read.	Published works	Improved grade point average (GPA)
	1	1	1	2
	2%	2%	2%	5%
OTHER				
1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?	Don't know.	General comment that SBDM is working.	Blank/ no response	Other
	1	3	2	7
	2%	5%	3%	12%
2. What do you feel is going well with the process?	Takes big work load off principal.	Good/ better decisions are being made.	Blank/ no response	General comment that the process is working well.
	1	2	1	10
	2%	3%	2%	17%
3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?	Principal is not supportive of SBDM.	Need more support/ involvement by District Office.	No or no response.	Other
	1	3	21	9
	3%	8%	53%	23%

Response Key	17	18	19	20
2. What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM?				
3. What do you believe are the general feelings of your parents about SBDM?				
OUTCOMES				
1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?	Scheduling improvements (increased flexibility)	Cannot decipher/ interpret answer	Process improvements	Other
	1	2	0	3
	2%	3%	0%	5%
2.a. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school?				
2.b. In what way?				
3. a. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM?				

Response Key	17	18	19	20
Questions				
DECISION-MAKING				
4. a. What are the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Council in your school?				
4.b. How are they different from the SAC?				
5. What types of decisions are made by the Site Council?	Comp. time	Staff training	Day to day, general operations	Inclusion/ multi-culturalsim
	1	1	3	5
	2%	2%	5%	8%
6. How are decisions being made by the Site Council?	Cannot decipher answer			
	1			
	2%			
7. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?				
SATISFACTION WITH S.B.D.M.				
1. Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school?				

Response Key	17	18	19	20
3.b. Can you list some?	Other			Higher class attendance
	1			1
	2%			
OTHER				
1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?	Lack of power/ authority of Site Council.			
	1			
	2%			
2. What do you feel is going well with the process?	Other			Organization/ running of meetings
	4			2
	7%			3%
3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?	Site Council members should attend Central Council meetings.			
	1			
	3%			

Response Key	21
Questions	
DECISION-MAKING	
4. a. What are the functions and responsibilities of the school Site Council in your school?	
4.b. How are they different from the SAC?	
5. What types of decisions are made by the Site Council?	Multi-age issues
	1
	2%
6. How are decisions being made by the Site Council?	
7. How would you describe your role in the decision making process?	
SATISFACTION WITH S.B.D.M.	
1. Are you satisfied with the results of SBDM at your school?	

Response Key	21
2. What do you believe are the general feelings of your teachers about SBDM?	
3. What do you believe are the general feeliings of your parents about SBDM?	Missing/blank
	2
	3%
OUTCOMES	
1. What effects have you observed at your school as a result of SBDM?	Missing/blank
	2
	3%
2.a. Has student learning been affected by SBDM at your school?	Missing/blank
	2
	3%
2.b. In what way?	
3. a. Do you think student outcomes have improved at your school as a result of SBDM?	

Response Key	21
3.b. Can you list some?	
OTHER	
1. What do you feel is not working the way you would like to see it work? Why?	
2. What do you feel is going well with the process?	
3. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?	

APPENDIX B - SURVEY

- Survey Form

- Results of Survey - Closed Questions
  - Narrative Report
  - Spreadsheet

- Results of Open-Ended Questions
  - Narrative Report
  - Spreadsheet

SURVEY OF SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING COUNCILS IN LEON COUNTY

Return your completed survey in the attached envelope to **SBDM Central Council, Leon County Schools,** 3955 West Pensacola St., Tallahassee, FL. 32304 by April 30, 1996

We at the Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Central Council need your help to determine how well SBDM is working in your school and what improvements, if any, are needed. Please help us by completing this survey and returning it by April 30, 1996. ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL.
Directions: Complete questions 1-41 by filling in the letter that best represents your response to the question. Complete questions 42-46 by writing in your response on the attached page.

1. Indicate your status on the Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council.
A = Currently serving on a council B = Served in the past, not currently serving .....

FOR QUESTIONS 4-41: Answer these questions based on your experience on the SBDM council on which you currently serve or (if not serving) on the council on which you most recently served.

4. How long have you served/did you serve?
A = Less than 6 months B = 6 months-1 year C = More than 1 year but less than 2 years D = More than 2 years.....

6. Which group do/did you represent on the Council?
A = Teachers B = Principals or Assistant Principals C = Parents D = Support personnel E = Other (Specify_____)

7. Are/Were you also a member of the School Advisory Council (SAC)? A = Yes B = No.....

8. Is/Was the SBDM council combined with the SAC? A = Yes B = No.....

10. How often do/did you attend SBDM council meetings?
A = Always B = Most of the time C = About half the time D = Once in a while E = Never.....

Response Key for Questions 12-18:
A = ALWAYS B = MOST OF THE TIME C = ABOUT HALF THE TIME D = ONCE IN A WHILE E = NEVER

12. Your Council's members communicate effectively with each other.....

13. Your Council's decisions are carried out.....

14. You feel comfortable participating in your Council's decision making activities.....

15. You are satisfied with the opportunities you have to participate in decisions made by your Council.....

16. The principal's involvement in your Council's decision making improves the Council's decision making.....

17. The chairperson's involvement in your Council's decision making improves the Council's decision making.....

18. The Council's decisions are clearly communicated to the groups affected by the Council's decisions.....

Response Key for Questions 20-30:
A = STRONGLY AGREE B = AGREE C = UNSURE D = DISAGREE E = STRONGLY DISAGREE

20. You are satisfied with your Council's usual method for making final decisions.....

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esponse Key for Questions 20-30:
= STRONGLY AGREE B = AGREE C = UNSURE D = DISAGREE E = STRONGLY DISAGREE

. Academic performance at your school has improved because of Site-Based Decision Making.....

. Student learning at your school has improved because of Site-Based Decision Making.....

. The quality of decisions that affect your school has improved due to Site-Based Decision Making.....

. Site-Based Decision Making should be continued at your school.....

. Site-Based Decision Making at your school needs major improvement.....

. The group representation on your Council should stay the same.....

. Your Council has enough time to meet.....

. You have a clear understanding of the purpose of your Council.....

. Your Council's relationship with the SBDM Central Council has been beneficial.....

. Has the training you received adequately prepared you to serve on your council? (Answer all that apply)
= Yes B= No C= Have not had any training D= Training needed in _____

. Your Council makes decisions about: (Fill in all that apply.)
= Curriculum and Instruction (excluding school improvement) B= School Improvement Plan C= Personnel D= Budget
= Don't know [If you don't know, skip the next question].....

Your Council makes decisions about: (Fill in all that apply.) A= Student Discipline (including dress code) .....
= Course Scheduling C= Technology D= Facility Management E= Other _____

. The following groups are well represented on your council: (Fill in all that apply)
= Teachers B= Business Partners C= Parents D= Administrators E= None of these are well represented.....

. The following groups are well represented on your Council: (Fill in all that apply)
= Support Personnel B= Community Members C= Students D= None of these are well represented .....

. Which method does the Council normally use to make a final decision?
= Consensus B= Majority rules C= Principal decides D= Chairperson decides E= Other (Specify_____)

. On which school's Council do/did you serve?
Fill in the Special Coding Section below with the school code attached)

.PLEASE COMPLETE QUESTIONS ON NEXT PAGE.

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Please complete the questions below:

42. Please briefly describe the process by which the Council makes decisions.

43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.

44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.

45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?

46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?

SCHOOL CODES ON BACK

SCHOOL CODES

Please fill in the Special Coding Section with your school code

ELEMENTARY

Apalachee..... 0441
Bond..... 0301
Brevard..... 0081
Buck Lake..... 0521
Chaires..... 0491
DeSoto Trail..... 0511
Ft. Braden..... 0561
Gilchrist..... 0381
Hartsfield..... 0041
Hawks Rise..... 1131
Killearn Lakes... 0481
Moore..... 0421
Oak Ridge..... 0171
Pineview..... 0311
Riley..... 0231
Ruediger..... 0091
Sabal Palm..... 0071
Sealey..... 0431
Springwood..... 0501
Sullivan..... 0031
Wesson..... 0061
Woodville..... 0131

MIDDLE

Belle Vue..... 0391
Cobb..... 0032
Deerlake..... 0531
Fairview..... 0451
Ft. Braden..... 0561
Griffin..... 0222
Nims..... 0291
Raa..... 0092
Swift Creek..... 1151

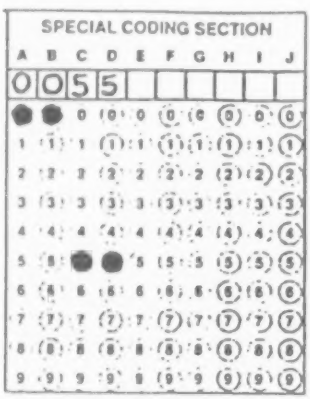
HIGH

Godby..... 0161

DISTRICT-WIDE

Adult Ed..... 9003
Second Chance.. 0191
ARC..... 1101
Everhart..... 0411
Little Chaires..... 0121
Lively..... 0361
SAIL..... 0204
TAP..... 0205

Example: **School** Baxter Elem. **Code** 0055



RESULTS OF SURVEY OF LEON COUNTY SCHOOL SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING COUNCIL MEMBERS, ADMINISTERED APRIL-MAY 1996

Response Rate/Respondent Characteristics: We received 206 survey forms from 43 schools. Approximately two-thirds of the respondents are currently serving on an SBDM council and have served or did serve for more than one year. Nearly all (94%) state that they attend SBDM council meetings always (69%) or most of the time (26%).

Results: Overall, respondents expressed a great deal of satisfaction with the SBDM process. Over 82% of respondents:

1. Believe that council members communicate effectively with each other always or most of the time;

2. Believe their council's decisions are carried out always or most of the time;

3. Feel comfortable participating in their council's decision making activities always or most of the time;

4. Are satisfied with the opportunities they have to participate in the council's decision making always or most of the time;

5. Believe the chairperson's involvement in the council's decision making improves decision making always or most of the time;

6. Believe the council's decisions are clearly communicated to the groups affected by the council's decisions always or most of the time;

7. Are satisfied with the council's usual method for making final decisions;

8 . Support the continuation of SBDM at their schools;

9. Believe they have a clear understanding of the purpose of their councils.

Likewise, 80% of respondents believe the principal's involvement in the council's decision making improves decision making always or most of the time, and 76% agree or strongly agree that the quality of decisions at their schools has improved due to SBDM. Only 9% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.

However, there were some findings that may indicate the need for some improvements in SBDM:

1. 21% of respondents agree or strongly agree that SBDM needs major improvement at their schools and 14% are unsure if major improvements are needed;

2. 24% disagree or strongly disagree that group representation on their councils should stay the same, while 17% are unsure if they should remain the same;

3. 48% are unsure if their council's relationship with the Central SBDM Council has been beneficial, while 6% disagree or strongly disagree that it has been beneficial;

4. 24% have received no training on the SBDM process;

5. Less than 28% believe that business partners, community members, or students are well represented on their councils and only 59% think that parents are well represented;

6. 22% disagree or strongly disagree that their councils have enough time to meet and 11% are unsure if they have enough time to meet.

Additional findings are as follows:

1. 32-40% of respondents are unsure whether academic performance and student learning at their schools have improved because of SBDM, 45-55% believe academic performance and learning have improved due to SBDM;

2. 72% report that their councils normally use consensus to make a final decision, while 20% state that the majority rules, and 8% say the principal normally makes final decisions;

3. Over 69% report that their councils make decisions concerning curriculum and instruction, the school improvement plan, student discipline, and technology; 54-59% state that their councils decide matters concerning budget and facility management; and 37-39% indicated that their councils decide issues regarding personnel and course scheduling.

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF LEON COUNTY SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING COUNCILS ADMINISTERED APRIL-MAY 1996						
QUESTION	A	B	C	D	E	
1. Indicate your status on the Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council.	Currently serving on a council	Served in the past, not currently serving				Missing Data
	129	74				3
	64%	36%				
4. How long have you served/ did you serve?	Less than 6 months	6 months-1 year	More than 1 year but less than 2 years	More than 2 years		Missing Data
	7	66	55	76		2
	3%	32%	27%	37%		
6. Which group do/ did you represent?	Teachers	Principals or Assistant Principals	Parents	Support Personnel	Other	Missing Data
	122	19	31	16	13	5
	61%	9%	15%	8%	6%	
7. Are/ were you also a member of the School Advisorty Council (SAC)?	Yes	No				Missing Data
	123	81				2
	60%	40%				
8. Is/was the SBDM council combined with the SAC?	Yes	No				Missing Data
	55	148				3
	27%	73%				
10. How often do/ did you attend SBDM council meetings?	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	140	54	7	3	0	2
	69%	26%	3%	1%	0%	

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12. Your council's members communicate effectively with each other.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	49	135	14	3	0	2
	24%	67%	7%	1%	0%	

13. Your council's decisions are carried out.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	89	92	13	7	1	4
	44%	46%	6%	3%	0%	

14. You feel comfortable participating in your council's decision making activities.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	111	67	15	7	3	3
	55%	33%	7%	3%	1%	

15. You are satisfied with the opportunities you have to participate in decisions made by your council.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	108	65	17	10	4	2
	53%	32%	8%	5%	2%	

16. The principal's involvement in your council's decision making improves the council's decsion making.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	102	60	20	16	4	4
	50%	30%	10%	8%	2%	

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17. The chairperson's involvement in your council's decision making improves the council's decision making.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	99	84	14	4	2	3
	49%	41%	7%	2%	1%	

18. The council's decisions are clearly communicated to the groups affected by the council's decisons.	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Once in a while	Never	Missing Data
	81	95	19	6	0	5
	40%	47%	9%	3%	0%	

20. You are satisfied with your council's usual method for making final decisions.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	72	102	14	15	2	1
	35%	50%	7%	7%	1%	

22. Academic performance at your school has improved because of Site-Based Decision Making.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	29	63	82	22	7	3
	14%	31%	40%	11%	3%	

23. Student learning your school has improved because of Site-Based Decision Making.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	31	78	63	18	7	9
	16%	40%	32%	9%	4%	

24. The quality of decisions that affect your school has improved due to Site-Based Decision Making.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	61	90	31	17	1	6
	31%	45%	16%	9%	1%	
25.Site-Based Decision Making should be continued at your school.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	120	48	25	8	3	2
	59%	24%	12%	4%	1%	
26. Site-Based Decision Making at your school needs major improvement.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	22	21	28	88	43	4
	11%	10%	14%	44%	21%	
27. The group representation on your council should stay the same.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	45	76	35	40	8	2
	22%	37%	17%	20%	4%	
28. Your council has enough time to meet.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	48	89	23	36	8	2
	24%	44%	11%	18%	4%	
29. You have a clear understanding of the purpose of your council.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	93	91	11	7	2	2
	46%	45%	5%	3%	1%	

30. Your council's relationship with the SBDM Central Council has been beneficial.	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Missing Data
	31	62	97	11	2	3
	15%	31%	48%	5%	1%	

31. Has the training you received adequately prepared you to serve on your council?	Yes	No	Have not had any training	Training needed in		Missing Data
	130	11	50	4		
	63%	5%	24%	2%		

33. Your council makes decisions about:	Curriculum and instruction (excluding school improvement)	School improvement plan	Personnel	Budget	Don't know	Missing Data
	145	164	76	111	8	
	70%	80%	37%	54%	4%	

34. Your council makes decisions about:	Student discipline	Course scheduling	Technology	Facility management	Other	Missing Data
	149	81	143	121	32	
	72%	39%	69%	59%	16%	

36. The following groups are well represented on your council:	Teachers	Business partners	Parents	Administrators	None of these are well represented	Missing Data
	199	55	121	191	0	
	97%	27%	59%	93%	0%	

38. The following groups are well represented on your council:	Support personnel	Community members	Students	None of these are well represented	Misaligned answer	Missing Data
	133	55	37	50	5	
	65%	27%	18%	24%	2%	

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40. Which method does the council normally use to make a final decision?	Consensus	Majority rules	Principal decides	Chairperson decides	Other	Missing Data
	149	41	16	1	1	
	72%	20%	8%	0%	0%	
41. On which school's council do/ did you serve?						

RESULTS OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS ON SURVEY OF LEON COUNTY SCHOOL SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING COUNCIL MEMBERS, ADMINISTERED APRIL-MAY 1996

Overall Response Rate:

One hundred eighty (180) of the 206 respondents answered one or more of the four open-ended questions discussed below.

Results:

One hundred sixty-one (161) of the 180 respondents answered Question 43, "Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site Based Decision Making." Results are presented below:

1. 59% of respondents stated that as a result of Site Based Decision Making, more people have an opportunity to be involved, have input into decision making; that people have a greater feeling of "buy-in, ownership of, comfort with" decision making; or that people have a feeling of empowerment, an equal say, a voice in decision making.

2. 20% of respondents stated that as a result of Site Based Decision Making, more people are aware of how their school operates, how school decisions are made, or are aware of problems affecting their schools.

3. 17% of respondents stated that as a result of Site Based Decision Making, better decisions are being made, a better decision making system is in place, better ideas for problem solving have been generated, or problems are solved in a better manner.

4. 12% of respondents stated that as a result of Site Based Decision Making, there is a greater feeling of collegiality, bonding, sensitivity, teamwork, or cohesiveness (primarily among school staff).

5. 11% of respondents stated that as a result of Site Based Decision Making, there is better, improved, or more communication.

Results of Open-Ended Questions on Survey of Leon County School Site-Based Decision Making Council Members, Administered April-May 1996
Page 2

One hundred sixty-three (163) of the 180 respondents answered Question 44, "Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site Based Decision Making." Results are presented below:

1. 34% of respondents believe that the process takes too much time, requires too much work, or takes too much time away from teaching duties.

2. 21% of respondents believe that there are too many competing opinions or too much friction between factions on the Council to keep the Council from doing its job or that some Council members place their personal agendas above the best interests of the school as a whole.

3. 15% of respondents believe that the principal or school administration has too much control or that the Council defers to or relies on the principal's or administration's judgment too often.

4. 10% of respondents believe that there is a lack of clarity among Council members about how the SBDM process should work or there is a need to train Council members.

One hundred forty-five (145) of the 180 respondents answered Question 45, "What are your suggestions for improving Site Based Decision Making?" Eighty-seven percent (87%) recommended changes, while 13% thought that no improvements were needed. Results for recommended changes are presented below:

1. 15% of respondents cited a need for more training for Council members.

2. 9% of respondents recommended that their Council be given more authority/power or should be involved in decision making in more areas or areas of greater importance

3. 8% of respondents said that notification of stakeholders re: Council decisions or important activities should be improved.

4. 6% of respondents said that Council members should be compensated for serving on the Council with pay or comp. time.

5. 5% of respondents believe that additional time should be provided for learning about the SBDM process, for additional meetings, or for other matters related to the process.

6. 6% of respondents stated that Council members' decision making authority needs to be clarified.

7. 6% of respondents think that their principal/administration's decision making power/authority needs to be reduced or that a means for the Council to override the principal's decisions should be provided.

Seventy-three (73) of the 180 respondents answered Question 46, "If you are no longer serving on a school Council, why are you no longer serving?" Results are presented below:

1. 18% of respondents felt they had served long enough and it was time for someone else to serve.

2. 16% of respondents said they had served the maximum time allowed on the Council or that their terms had expired.

3. 16% of respondents reported that serving on the Council took too much of their time or required them to do too much.

4. 12% of respondents stated they were dissatisfied with the Council, did not feel the Council was worthwhile, or lost interest in Council activities.

5. 8% of respondents reported that they no longer taught at the school where they served on the Council or no longer had children in the school where they served on the Council.

6. 8% of respondents said that their teaching duties had changed so that they could no longer serve on the Council.

7. 7% of respondents said they had difficulty attending meetings due to the times/days on which meetings were scheduled (conflicted with other commitments).

	1	2	3	4	5
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.	More people (stakeholders) have an opportunity to be involved/ have input into decision making (SEE 13, 17).	More people (stakeholders) are aware of how school operatess/ how decisions are made (SEE 9).	Better/ improved/ more communication.	Development of leadership skills by SBDM members.	Better decisions are being made; better decision making system; better ideas for problems solving; better problem solving..
	68	33	18	2	27
	42%	20%	11%	1%	17%
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Process takes too much time/ requires too much to do (SEE 10, 19, 24, 25).	Give more power/authority to the school council as a whole [rather than committees	Lack of follow up to ensure implementation of decisions.	Members' personal agendas vs. best interests of entire school (SEE 5, 28, 43).	Too many competing views/opinions (which keeps Council from doing its job); friction between factions/ groups on Council.
	47	2	7	9	25
	29%	1%	4%	6%	15%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Compensate teachers/ parents for extra work such as serving on Council (with money, comp time).	Focus more on (curricula and other) issues that directly affect students.	Improve notification/ communication of Council decisions or other important activities-provide notification of agenda items before meetings; post results of meetings afterward;start county wide SBDM newsletter.	Increase representation of parents (on Council (SEE 5, 6, 7, 42, 46, 52, 56).	Increase representation of students (on Council).
	8	1	11	5	1
	6%	1%	8%	3%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?	No longer teaching at the school/ any school; no longer have children in the schoo/ any school	(Teacher) duties/ responsibilities changed.	Felt he/she had served long enough; time for someone else to serve.	Took too much of his/her time; had too much to do.	He/she was not re-appointed.
	6	6	13	12	1
	8%	8%	18%	16%	1%

	6	7	8	9	10	11
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.	Improvements related to school discipline/ student behavior (SEE 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33).	Greater feeling of collegiality/ bonding/ sensitivity/ teamwork/ cohesiveness.	Decisions are timely.	Stakeholders are informed/ better informed of decisions.	Better morale (among school staff).	Improvements in scheduling/ calendar
	14	20	2	3	6	11
	9%	12%	1%	2%	4%	7%
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Lack of involvement/ interest of school staff	Lack of clarity about how SBDM process should work, lack of understanding of SBDM process, need for training of council members (SEE 12, 26).	Lack of involvement/ input/ participation by parents/ community partners.	Lack of involvement by students	Time required to orient new Council members.	Principal/ administration has too much control/ authority.
	8	16	12	4	2	17
	5%	10%	7%	2%	1%	10%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Increase representation of business partners/ community representatives	Increase representation of school support staff.	End SBDM (and turn over authority to administration).	Limit time for meeting/ decision making (SEE 10, 11,19, 20, 23, 28, 34, 35, 37, 41, 49).	Provide additional staff.	Provide additional time for SBDM (for learning, additional meetings); have more meetings.
	6	7	2	1	1	7
	4%	5%	1%	1%	1%	5%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?	Serving on Council was stressful.	Received no appreciation for serving on Council.	He/she was dissatisfied with Council; did not feel it was worthwhile; lost interest.	Served maximum amount of time allowed.	Had difficulty attending meetings due to scheduling.	His/her term expired.
88	2	1	9	6	89 5	6
	3%	1%	12%	8%	7%	-

	12	13	14	15	16	17
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.	Improvements in School Improvement Plan.	Greater feeling of "buy in/ ownership of/ comfort with" decision making by stakeholders.	Improvements in recreation	Improvements in student "pick up"	Improvements in appearance of school.	Gives people feeling of empowerment, that they have an equal say/ voice in decision making; democratic decision making
	9	10	1	1	1	17
	6%	6%	1%	1%	1%	11%
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Complexity of issues; council members need more background info on issues to be decided by Council.	Scheduling of meetings/ finding convenient meeting times.	Council members defer to/ rely on principal's/ administration's judgment too often/ prefer to let principal make decision.	Communication of Council decisions and other important information to non-Council members.	Lack of involvement (general comment)/ poor attendance or participation at Council meetings.	Lack of secretarial/support assistance.
	5	7	7	2	8	1
	3%	4%	4%	1%	5%	1%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Provide training/ more training (general comment).	Need to clarify members'/ groups' decision making authority.	More communication with other school councils; share ideas with other councils.	Reserve/ maintain specific areas of authority for principal/ adminnistration; don't take too much control/ authority from principal/ administration.	Limit/ reduce Council's authority; make council an advisory body only	Stricter adherence to (meeting) procedures/ protocol
	19	8	4	3	2	1
	13%	6%	3%	2%	1%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?	No response/ blank.	Not applicable or "NA," i.e., currently serving	Cannot decipher meaning of response,	Became involved/ more involved in other activities (SAC,	Someone else elected/ will take respondent's place on Council.	
	76	32	1	6	2	
			1%	8%	3%	

	18	19	20	21	22	23
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.	Gives council members the "big picture/ greater perspective" re: problems, soloutions.	Improvement in curriculum.	Improvements in reading	Improvements in safety procedures.	Cannot decipher exact meaning of comment.	No response/ blank.
	2	3	2	4	2	19
	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Lack of authority/ power of Council/Council should be involved/ more involved in decision making in more areas/ Council should have more authority/ power (incl. power to implement decisions).	Too much paperwork	Poor communication/ interaction/ coordination with county/ district office.	Lack of sufficient funding.	People do not feel free to voice their opinions; no mechanism for input from various stakeholders	Lack of feeling of ownership of the decision making process by stakeholders/ decision making by "the few" (SEE 36).
	4	1	2	7	11	6
	2%	1%	1%	4%	7%	4%
45. What are your suggestions for Improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Council should be involved in decision making in more areas/ areas of greater importalnce; increase decision making power/ authority of school council..	Reduce amount of paperwork.	Provide additional secretarial/ support staff.	Merge Site Council and SAC.	Improve relationship between teachers/ professionals and parents	Have Site Council deal with major issues only.
	13	1	1	1	1	1
	9%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						

	24	25	26	27	28	29
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.	Don't know/ unsure	General comment that SBDM has produced benefits/ improvements	More focus on student learning	Other	Improvement in day-to-day operational matters	None or "very few," that is, cannot name any benefits.
	1	2	1	2	4	3
	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Lack of time to research (issues).	Takes time away from teaching responsibilities.	Lack of experienced Council members	Poor/ ineffective leadership (incl. poor training by "leaders.")	Opposition to SBDM by specific groups (administrators, teachers, district staff); lack of cooperation by principal or other specific individuals/ groups to attend meetings/ participate.	Communication between (council) representative and group represented
	3	3	3	2	10	1
	2%	2%	2%	1%	6%	1%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Non-Council members not reading posted minutes, agendas, etc. to inform themselves re: Council business, decisions	Establish procedures/ designate someone to ensure Council decisions are implemented.	Reduce principal's control/ power; provide mechanism to override principal's veto, e.g., three-fifths vote of Council.	Increase district support for school Site Council.	Provide additional resources (general comment).	Provide training/ additional training in specific areas (SBDM process, relationship/ communication between Council members, effective decision making).
	0	2	8	2	1	3
	0%	1%	6%	1%	1%	2%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						

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	30	31	32	33	34	35
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.	Improvement in instruction (general comment), including "teaching areas."	Improvement in student learning/ achievement/ progress	Improvement in staffing/ personnel areas	Improvement in tehchnology and related training in use of technology.	Improvement in budget and related areas.	
	2	6	4	2	1	
	1%	4%	2%	1%	1%	
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Need for members to serve longer terms (longer than one year).	Focus more on issues affecting students.	No response/ blank.	Communication problems.	None, i.e., there are no barriers.	
	1	1	17	4	6	0
	1%	1%		2%	4%	0%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Increase length of school Council members' terms (SEE 32. 33,43, 48).	Change meeting times to make meetings more convenient to attend.	Members should serve staggered terms	Members should be required to serve more than one term/ YEAR.	Add staff to research issues.	Have more frequent, but briefer, meetings.
	1	7	3	2	1	1
	1%	5%	2%	1%	1%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						

	36	37	38	39	40	41
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.						
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Lack of feeling of being represented by Council representative.	Need for "new blood" on Council.	Unsure/ don't know.	Council members not following procedures/ protocol.	Lack of involvement by business representatives.	Lack of involvement/ representation by support staff.
	2	3	1	3	4	3
	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Make Site Council and SAC separate bodies.	Allow school staff to work on SBDM related tasks as part of their school duties.	Designate district staff member to serve as info/ resource/ contact person for the school council.	Council members should be more sensitive/ tactful/ respectful of others' views.	Improve/ increase communication.	Have fewer Council meetings.
	0	1	1	2	2	2
	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						

	42	43	44	45	46	47
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.						
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.	Council members not following procedures/ protocol.	Council members who focus on only one issue.	Lack of support from District/ School Board	Other	Lack of representation (of all stakeholders)	Goals/ objectives not worded in terms of performance.
	0	1	1	2	2	1
	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Increase representativeness/ heterogeneity of council.	Limit terms of Council members.	No response/ blank	None; continue same as always, etc.	Increase parental invovlvement.	Provide additional funding.
	4	3	35	19	4	2
	3%	2%		13%	3%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						

	48	49	50	51	52	53
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.						
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.						
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	Have more turn over/ new blood among Council members.	Speed up meetings; make process less time consuming.	Expand discussion of issues/ concerns by Council.	Faculty members should work a set amount of time before they can serve on Council.	Increase teacher/ faculty involvement.	Have more Council members responsible for "leadership" activities, e.g., co-facilitation, co-recording of meetings.
	2	5	1	1	4	
	1%	3%	1%	1%	3%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						

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	54	55	56	57	58	59
43. Please list 1-3 significant benefits that have resulted from Site-Based Decision Making.						
44. Please list 1-3 significant barriers to the success of Site-Based Decision Making.						
45. What are your suggestions for improving Site-Based Decision Making?	SBDM process/ Council activities should be reviewed regularly.	Change method of electing Council members-eliminate grade level representation and have open election.	Increase involvement (general comment).	Eliminate Central Council-combine DAC and Central Council.	Increase student involvement.	Implement long range planning.
	1	1	3	1	2	1
	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
46. If you are no longer serving on a school council, why are you no longer serving?						